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~~No. 26~~
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P L E A

F O R

Mechanick Preachers,

S H E W I N G,

First, That the following a Secular Trade,
or Employment, is consistent with the
Office of a Gospel Minister.

Secondly, That Human Learning is no
Essential Qualification for that Service.

W I T H A

Necessary Distinction

B E T W E E N T H E

ART, and the GIFT, of Preaching.

By RICHARD CLARIDGE. *K*

*Acts 20. 33. 34. I have coveted no Man's Silver, or Gold or Apparel.
Yea, You your selves know that these Hands have ministred unto my Ne-
cessities, and to them that were with me.*

1 Cor. 3. 19. For the Wisdom of this World is Foolishness with God.

L O N D O N :

Printed and Sold by the Assigns of *J. Sowle*, at the Bible in George-
Yard, in Lombard-Street. 1727.

Belongs to Our Monthly Meeting



T H E

P R E F A C E.

Reader,

HA D this little Treatise come timely to hand, it might have accompanied the other *Posthumous Works* of it's Author, a *Collection* of which was publish'd last Year: But, that it was then mislaid, and is now thought too Good to be lost, are the Reasons of it's separate Publication.

'Twas written while he was yet in Communion with the *Baptists*, and preached freely among them, in opposition

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position to some of their Teachers, who were maintain'd by settled Stipends and Præcontracts.

The Subject is weighty, viz. *The Maintenance and Qualification of Gospel-Ministers,*

In handling which,

He first cites the Texts, which the Advocates for settled Maintenance of Ministers do usually produce in Favour of their Opinion, shews wherein they have been misinterpreted, and confirms his different Exposition by the Precepts and Practice of the Apostles.

He then shews that Human Learning is no Essential Qualification for a Gospel - Minister, rightly distinguishing

guishing between the Art of Preaching, and the Gift of Preaching ; this being absolutely necessary, the other not : A Distinction, which seriously consider'd, may be doubly serviceable ; *First*, To prevent Men's Intrusion into the Ministerial Office, in a presumptuous Dependence on meer Natural Parts, or acquired Abilities ; and, *secondly*, To excite those, who, from an assured Sense of Duty, are mov'd to that Good Work, to answer their Call, notwithstanding the want of those outward Accomplishments.

In a Word : His Aim is, to remove from the Ministers of the Gospel, the grand Temptations of Ease and Luxury, by recommending an honest Industry for necessary Subsistence ; that their Ministry appearing clear from

finister and self-interested Views, they may stand approved in the Consciences of their Hearers, as such who labour *not of Constraint, but willingly, not for filthy Lucre's Sake, but of a ready Mind.*

'Tis no Wonder, if this Discourse please not the Palates of those, who, while they assert it Unlawful for Preachersto Trade, do yet themselves make a Trade of Preaching : Nor is it any New Thing for Truth and Worldly Interest to oppose one another.

Farewel.

A

P L E A

F O R

Mechanick Preachers.

TH E *Texts*, which the Assertors of the Unlawfulness of a Gospel Minister's following any secular Trade or Employment, do principally insist upon, are,

FIRST, *Matth. IV. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee saw two Brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his Brother, casting a Net into the Sea, (for they were Fishers)*

And he saith unto them, Follow me : and I will make you Fishers of Men.

And they straightway left their Nets, and followed Him.

And going on from thence, he saw other two Brethren, James the Son of Zebedee, and John his Brother, in a Ship with Zebedee their Father, mending their Nets : and he called them :

And

And they immediately left the Ship, and their Father, and followed him.

SECONDLY, 1 Cor. IX. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Have not we Power to forbear Working?*

Who goeth a Warfare at any Time at his own Charges? Who planteth a Vineyard and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eateth not of the Milk of the Flock?

Say I these Things as a Man? Or saith not the Law the same also?

For it is written in the Law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take Care for Oxen?

Or saith he it altogether for our Sakes? For our Sakes, no doubt, this is written: That he that ploweth should plow in Hope; and that he that thresheth in Hope, should be Partaker of his Hope.

If we have sown unto you Spiritual Things, is it a great Thing if we shall reap your Carnal Things?

If others be Partakers of this Power over you, are not we rather? —

Do ye not know, that they which minister about Holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple? And they which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar?

Even

Even so hath the Lord Ordained, that they which Preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.

THIRDLY, 2 Tim. II. 4. *No Man that warreth, entangleth himself with the Affairs of this Life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier.*

FOURTHLY, 1 Tim. IV. 13. 15. *Till I come, give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine.*

Meditate upon these Things; give thy self wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear unto all.

In Order to a particular Disquisition of these Texts we shall allot to each of them a several Section.

SECT. I.

Mat. IV. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Explained.

And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two Brethren, Simon called Peter and Andrew his Brother, casting a Net into the Sea: (for they were Fishers)

And he saith unto them, Follow me: and I will make you Fishers of Men:

And they straightway left their Nets, and followed him.

B

And

And going on from thence, he saw other two Brethren, James the Son of Zebedee and John his Brother, in a Ship with Zebedee their Father, mending their Nets: and he called them:

And they immediately left the Ship, and their Father, and followed him.

Peter and Andrew, and the two Sons of Zebedee were Fishers before, and after, their Call to the Apostleship. Their Vocation to catch Men with the Net of the Gospel, did not engage them wholly to lay aside their Fishing Trade.

But since some, whose Interest and Practice that Interpretation best suits, will infer from the Words of the Text, which says of Peter and Andrew, that upon CHRIST'S CALL, *they straightway left their Nets and followed him*; and of the two Sons of Zebedee, that *they immediately left the Ship, and their Father, and followed him*; that therefore they wholly renounced that Manner of Employment, or Way of Livelihood; we shall enquire into the Meaning of the Apostle's *Leaving their Nets*, and see what Sense the Phrase will bear.

First then, when the Apostles are said to *leave their Nets*, we are not to understand, that they left them *Literally* and *Absolutely*; for if this were the Sense, they were then never to return to their Fishing any more;
but

but this we find contradicted by the Apostle *Peter*, and several others, who fished all Night, *John XXI. 3.* which shews they had not * absolutely left their fishing Employment, tho' called to an higher Work, because they were afterward actually exercised in Fishing.

Secondly, That the Apostles did not after their Call to the Ministry, leave their Nets, so as not to return to them again, is agreeable to other Places of Scriptures, where the same Word [LEFT] is used, and cannot be understood literally and absolutely, without manifest Injury to the Text. I shall instance in two. The first is in *Luke V. 28.* where, upon Christ's calling of *Levi* or *Matthew*, from the Receipt of Custom, 'tis said, *he left all, rose up, and followed him.* Now if the Expression is to be taken Literally and Absolutely, then *Levi* left all he had in the World, because 'tis said, *he left all*; but if ^{it} so, where.

* Certè ad Piscatum redière, *John XXI.* Et Petrus postea Domum habuit. *Mat. VIII. 14.* Secuti sunt Christum, relictis Omnibus, scilicet, ut ferebat Vocatio Ministerii, cui primò inservièrunt, sed cum illud permitteret, ad sua redire, & Res suas curare poterant.

'Tis evident that they return'd to their Fishing. *John XXI.* And *Peter* had an House afterward. *Mat. VIII. 14.* They followed Christ, leaving all; Namely, when their Call to the Ministry required it, to which they principally devoted themselves; but when that would admit of it, they might return to their own Employments, and take Care of their Affairs. *Scultet. in Sy ops. Crit. super Luc. 5. 11.*

withal had *Levi* to give such a splendid Entertainment to our Lord, and the great Company of Publicans and Others at his House? as is mentioned. *V. 29.* How could a Man that had left all, be able to make a great Feast? And he that had nothing provide for a Multitude? The next Place I shall mention is in *Mark X. 28.* and *Luke XVIII. 28.* In the Verses foregoing, 'tis said, that a Young, Rich Ruler came to Christ, to be instructed what he should do to inherit Eternal Life? Christ having examined him, put him upon an extraordinary Trial of Obedience, which was, to sell his great Possessions, and give to the Poor, upon Promise of an Heavenly Treasure in Reversion. This saddened the young Man, and sent him away grieved, for he was very Rich. The Love of Earthly Possessions made him part with Christ. Upon which, Christ having acquainted his Disciples with the Difficulty of a Rich Man's entring into the Kingdom of Heaven, that trusts in his Riches, they cry out as Men amazed, *Who then can be saved?* Christ tells them, *With God all Things are possible;* that tho' Men cannot by natural Strength take off their Hearts from the irregular Love of Riches, yet God can enable them to do it by Supernatural Grace. *Peter* having heard the whole Discourse, and particularly observed the Treasure in Heaven promised to the young Man, if he would part with his Possessions

Possessions upon Earth, propounds a Question to Christ in Behalf of himself and his Fellow-Disciples, who had left all and followed Him, without any such special Motives, at their first embracing the Gospel, *What shall we have therefore?* Jesus said unto them, *Verily I say unto You, there is no Man that hath left House, or Parents, or Brethren, or Wife, or Children, for the Kingdom of God's Sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present Time, and in the World to come Life Everlasting.* Luke XVIII. 29. 30. compared with Mark X. 29. 30. and Matth. XIX. 27. 29.

Leaving, here, if Literally and Absolutely taken, will imply, that the Apostles upon their Call to the Ministry left all their Rights and Relations, whether Civil or Natural; But that could not be, for Peter had an House, Wife, and Mother in Law, after he was called to the Ministry. Mat. VIII. 14. 15. And our Saviour owned him under those Relations, as appears by his going to his House, and curing his Wife's Mother of a Fever.

By *Leaving*, then, in these Places, we are to understand, not an Absolute Disowning or Abrenunciation of them, for the Gospel doth not require this; but a denying or relinquishing of them, upon a Spiritual or Religious Account, as when Pa-

rents, or Wife, or Children, or any such outward Enjoyments, thwart our Duty to God, for so far forth as worldly Things are repugnant thereto, they are to be left by us.

Religion doth not destroy our Temporal Rights and Civil Relations; it rather superadds to our Title, by giving us a Covenant Interest, a sanctified Sense and Use of them, and teaching us to deny all inordinate Affection to them, and to count nothing dear unto us in Comparison of our Duty and Love to God.

Thus you see *Peter* and *Andrew*, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, were Fishers before, and after, their Call to the Apostleship, and did not wholly leave their particular Callings upon the Account of their Ministry.

And if this be not sufficient to clear up the Consistency of the Ministry with the following of a particular Calling, but farther Proof be required; I appeal to the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, whose Example makes for us in this Case; and, I think, is fully decisive therein.

At *Corinth* we find him at his Trade of Tent making, with *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, Acts. XVIII. 3. And to the Elders of the Church at *Ephesus*, he clears himself from all mercenary Imputations, in preaching
of

of the Gospel, *I have coveted no Man's Silver, or Gold, or Apparel, Acts XX. 33.* Yea, and remonstrates to their Consciences, *You, Your selves, know that these Hands have ministered to my Necessities, and to them that were with me. V. 34.*

OBJECT. Against this it is objected, that the Apostle spends a great Part of the Ninth Chapter of his first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, to assert his Liberty from working, and to prove that he, and others, which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. The Arguments he brings for this Purpose, are drawn from several Topicks, as

The Example of some other Apostles. V. 6.

The Common Law of Nations. V. 7.

The Testimony of *Moses's* Law. V. 8, 9, 10.

The Example of some Corinthian Teachers. V. 12.

The Practice of the Levitical Priesthood. V. 13.

And the Appointment of our Lord. V. 14.

In Answer to this, we shall proceed to

SECT.

SECT. II.

Wherein 1 Cor. IX. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. is considered.

Have not we Power to forbear Working?

Who goeth a Warfare at any Time at his own Charges? Who planteth a Vineyard and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eateth not of the Milk of the Flock?

Say I these Things as a Man? Or saith not the Law the same also?

For it is written in the Law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn. Doth God take Care for Oxen?

Or saith he it altogether for our Sakes? For our Sakes, no doubt, this is written: That he that ploweth should plow in Hope; and that he that thresheth in Hope, should be Partaker of his Hope.

If we have sown unto you Spiritual Things, is it a great Thing if we shall reap your Carnal Things?

If others be Partakers of this Power over you, are not we rather? —

*Do ye not know, that they which minister about Holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple?
And*

And they which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar?

Even so hath the Lord Ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.

The Apostle's Arguments in this Place do not prove it to be the Duty of a Minister of the Gospel, wholly to leave his particular Trade or Calling: The utmost of what is proved, is a Power to require and receive Maintenance, which I do not deny, where the Minister is Indigent, and the Church able to relieve him; and to forbear Working too in some Cases. The grand Question therefore is, *In what Cases the Minister is to forbear Working, and to receive Maintenance?*

I answer to the first Part, or *his forbearing to work.*

FIRST, When he can work no longer, being disabled by Sicknes, Lameness or Blindness, or prevented by Imprisonment or the Like.

SECONDLY, When he has not wherewithal to subsist without.

And to the second Part, or *his receiving Maintenance*, I answer,

FIRST, When he or his Family are under Necessities, they are to be supplied by the Church.

C

SECOND.

SECONDLY, When called to travail in the Work of the Ministry, he may receive of the Brethren, what is freely given for his present Subsistence.

But where a Minister hath wherewith of his own, or is capable by his Labour to maintain himself and Family, notwithstanding his Call to the Ministry, a special Care is to be taken, that he burden not the Church: Nor may any Man lay down his particular Trade or Calling, on Purpose to be maintain'd at the Church's Charge. The Love of filthy Lucre is apt to steal into the Heart, and then the Oversight of the Flock will be taken out of base and ignoble Ends, by Constraint and not willingly.

It was the Command of CHRIST to his Apostles, to preach the Gospel ^{freely} freely, *Mat. X. 8.* In pursuance whereof, *Paul* took special Heed to work with his Hands, *1 Cor. 4. 12.* that he might keep the Gospel of Christ without Charge, *1 Cor. 9. 18.* He frequently reminds the *Corinthians* and *Thessalonians*, how he kept himself from being burthensome to any of them, *2 Cor. XI. 9. 12. 13.* And how he wrought with Labour and Travel Night and Day, that he might not be chargeable unto them, *1 Thess. II. 9. and 2 Thess. III. 8.* The Reason he gives in the next Words, *Not because we have not Power, but to make our selves an Example unto you, to follow*

us. V. 9. A Power he had to forbear Working, and to take Maintenance, as is shewn before, but he never put it into Act, save in his Extremities. 2 Cor. XI. 8, 9. and Philip, IV. 10, 15, 16. *Have we not Power, saith he, to forbear Working? Who goeth a Warfare at any Time, at his own Charges? Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eateth not of the Milk of the Flock?* 1 Cor. IX 6, 7, Here is a Power and no more; when it is to be exercised, we must learn of the Apostle, whose Practice, is the surest Exposition of his Doctrine: When he could get his Living by his particular Calling, he wrought with his Hands, but when he was a Prisoner, or upon his Travel for the Gospel, or the like, the Case was altered, and Maintenance became necessary: He stretched his Power no farther than Necessity exacted, and lest any should abuse his Doctrine in this Point, and make the Gospel burthensome or chargeable, he propounds himself for an Ensamble to after Teachers, 2 Thess. III. 9. *On purpose, saith Dr. (a) Hammond, To give them a Pattern to labour as he had done. Or as (a) Clark saith, He would be an Ensamble to Ministers, to follow him in Diligence, in some honest Calling: Or as (c) Estius comments, Exemplar Victum*

(a) Paraphr. in loc. (b) Annotat. ibid. (c) In Synops Critic.

proprio Labore querendi. An Example of getting their Livings by their own Labour.

From hence 'tis evident, there is a Maintenance due to the Ministers of the Gospel, and they have a Power to forbear Working, and to receive it, as in the Instances before mentioned: But, it being but a Power, the Reduction of it into Act, is to be directed by the Apostle's Example; for tho' he had such a Power, as appears by 1 Cor. IX. 6. *Have not we Power to forbear Working?* And 2 Thess. III. 9. *Not because we have not Power.* Yet he used it not 1 Cor. IX. 12, *Nevertheless we have not used this Power.* And 2 Thess. III. 8. *Neither did we eat any Man's Bread for nought; But wrought with Labour and Travel, Night and Day, that we might not be Chargeable to any of you.* But when he lacked and was in Necessity, 2 Cor. XI. 9. *That which was lacking to me, the Brethren, which came from Macedonia, supplied.* And Phil. IV. 16. *Ye sent once and again unto my Necessity.* Which can be no Ground for receiving Parochial Tithes, or the Tenths of Men's Increase; nor any Warrant for Bargain or Contract, to receive from the People, Quarterly or Yearly Stipends, by Subscription or otherwise.

OBJECT. But it may be objected, that the Apostle Paul took Wages. 2 Cor. XI. 8. *I robbed other Churches, taking Wages of them, to do you Service.*

ANSWER.

ANSWER. By a due Examination of the Place, the *Apostle's* Meaning will best appear, we will enquire then, what is to be understood by his *Robbing other Churches*, and *taking Wages*, and to help us herein, we must take Notice of his present Circumstances, which were very mean at that Time, for he *wanted* and *lacked*, ὑστερηθεὶς and ὑσέρημα the Words are *V. 9. Cum egerem, and, quod mihi deerat*, as *Beza* renders it; whereby is shewed his low indigent Condition. He was really in Want, he lacked absolute Necessaries, and the *Philippians* being a richer Church, than that of *Corinth* or *Thessalonica*, supplied his Want. And this was all his *Robbing* or *taking Wages*, as ἐσύλιστα and ἐλάνιον signify, compared with ὑστερηθεὶς and ὑσέρημα. The *Apostle* was in great Necessities, and because there were some false Teachers, got in among the *Corinthians*, who boasted of their free Preaching, that he might cut off Occasion from them of this kind of Boasting, he was resolved to take nothing of them, no not in his extream Necessity, but made bold with other Churches (the *Philippians* especially) that he might preach the Gospel to the *Corinthians* freely, *V. 7.* and keep himself from being burdensome unto them, *V. 9.* that so the false Teachers might not stop him of his Boasting in the Regions of *Achaia. V. 10.*

The Words *Robbing* and *Wages*, are Military Words, but they are not to be stretched

beyond the Scope of the Text. They do not imply, that the Apostle used Violence, or did Injury to the *Philippians*, for it was a free Communication with his Affliction. *Phil.* IV. 14. being at that Time, a Prisoner in *Rome*.

For a fuller Explanation of the Word *ὑπέσκησα* I refer you to Dr. *Hammond's* Notes upon *Mark* XII. 44. where you will find it excellently unfolded.

Where the Gospel of *Christ* is preached for filthy Lucre, it meets with great Prejudices in the Minds of the People; there being no such Alienation, as the mercenary preaching of free Grace: To tell them of the Blessed Tidings of a reconciled God freely in Jesus Christ, and to invite them in the Language of the Prophet, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money, come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy Wine and Milk without Money and without Price.* *Isai.* LV. 1. or bespeak them, as the Spirit and the Bride, saying, *Come, and let him that heareth say, come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.* *Rev.* XXII. 17. But as free as the Invitation is, the Messengers must be well paid for delivering it; is a Method that is apt to beget Jealousies in the People, that Theirs is more sought than Themselves, and Temporals rather aimed at than Spirituals. The Gospel is a Deed of free Pardon to poor peni-

tent Sinners, and the first Publishers of it were commanded to do it freely, and since 'tis the same Gospel, that is by all pretended to be taught, why should any expect other Allowances, than the first Dispensers had.

Our Lord told them, at his sending of them out, *that the Workman was worthy of his Meat.* Mat. X. 10. And the Apostle says, *that the Lord hath ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel,* 1 Cor. IX. 14. But how is this to be understood? (a) *Can* has laid down a most excellent Rule for the finding out of Scripture Truth, which is, by interpreting Scripture by Scripture, or as (b) *Augustin* more fully delivers it, "By illustrating dark Passages by clear, and ambiguous Passages, by those whose Sense is fixt, not omitting the Consideration of Antecedents, Consequents, Occasion and Scope of the Words, with other Circumstances, as the Phrase of Scripture, parallel Places, and Analogy of Faith. Observing this Rule, we shall be the less subject to Mistake our Saviour's and the Apostle's Meaning in these Scriptures. *Luke* Cap. X. V. 7. Calls that *μῆδος* Hire, which *Matthew* expresses by *Τροφή* Meat. The Syriack Version translated by *Tremellius*, hath *Cibus* Meat, and *Beza*, *Alimentum*, *Nourishment*, *Food*, *Viſtuals*, who

(a) *Pref.* to his Bible. (b) *De Doctr. Christi.* lib. 10;

hath this Note upon *Matt. X. 10.* (a) *Christ who chuseth and sendeth you forth, will also provide Meat for you, i. e. Necessary Food.* The Promise extendeth not to Superfluities. *Christ* bidsthem eat such Things as are set before them, *Luke X. 8.* ἐδῆτε τὰ παρατιθέμενα, *Contenti estote appposito vobis Cibo*, as *Beza* paraphraseth it; *Be content*, (when ye come into an House) *with what Food the People give you.* Necessaries, the Ministers of *Christ* must be provided with; bnt where Necessaries are not wanting, the Promise is wholly Silent.

'Tis also plain, from what has been discours'd, that a Minister may follow some particular Calling, and mind Secular Concerns, provided he neglect not his Call to the Ministry, and that his Heart be not overcharged with the Cares of this Life, *Luke XXI. 34.* Such a Secular Calling is consistent with the Service of *Christ*, in the Work of the Ministry, and very agreeable to *2 Tim. II. 4.* The Consideration of which leads us to

(a) Qui vos eligit, et mittit, Christus, etiam de Alimento providebit.

SECT. III.

2 Tim. II. 4. considered.

No Man that warreth, (a) entangleth himself with the Affairs of this Life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier.

A Person qualified, as we have before described, cannot be said to entangle himself with the Affairs of this Life.

But because this Text is by many made Use of, against a Minister's following a particular Calling, it will be Time well spent, to vindicate it from their Misapplication: I am not ignorant, that most Expositors run that Way, but that they have missed the Scope of the Apostle in this Place, I doubt not to make appear; and perhaps they were willing to miss it for advantagious Ends. The Context will give us some Light in this Matter: The Apostle exhorts *Timothy*, to be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus. Ver. 1. And to endure Hardness or (b) endure Afflictions, as 'tis Cap. IV. V. 5. are Exhortations directed immediately to *Timothy*, and the Words, *No Man that warreth, entangleth himself with the Affairs of this Life, &c.* are not preceptive, but illustrative, or brought in by Way of Similitude;

(a) ἐμπλέκεται ταῖς τῷ εἰν πραγματείαις.

(b) κακοπάθειαν

and in Similitudes, we are to take Notice of that which is principally intended, and agreeth with other Scriptures, where the same Subject is treated of. This must be granted, or else our Interpretations of Scripture, will often prove diametrically opposite. Now this seems to be principally intended, in this Similitude, namely, that as a good Souldier will not for any Hardship fly from his Colours to the Entanglements of the World, notwithstanding the Ease he may enjoy thereby; but will endure Hardiness with Courage and Patience, that he may please his General: So should *Timothy*, and all other Ministers of Christ, be constant and faithful to the Captain of their Salvation, and never omit their Duty for any Terrors or Discouragements, or be drawn from it by the Business or Concernments of this World. The Sum of all is this; *Timothy* is exhorted to Constancy and Perseverance in the Work of the Ministry, and he, and all Ministers of Christ, must be found stedfast therein, always preferring the Service of Christ, to the Affairs of this Life. To this Constancy and Stedfastness, they are encouraged from the Example, First, Of a Souldier, who will shun worldly Entanglements, and endure Hardness, that he may please his General. V. 3. 4. Secondly, Of one that strives in the Exercise of the Olympick Games, for he is not crowned, except he strive *νικῶν* that is, *lawfully*. V. 5. Thirdly, Of the Husbandman who must first labour, that is,

is, Plough and Sow, and take a great deal of Care before he comes to reap, and gather the Fruit. *V. 6.*

From these Examples, they are taught to continue faithful in the Service, whereunto they are called, and as the Husbandman must labour before he be made Partaker of the Fruits; and the Olympick Gamester strive lawfully, before he be crowned as Conquerour; and the Souldier endure Hardness, before he be rewarded by his General: So the Ministers of Christ must *fight the good Fight, finish their Course, and keep the Faith*, before they receive the *Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give them at that Day: And not to them only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing.* *2 Tim. IV. 7, 8.* So that Constancy and Perseverance in the Ministers, are the Things principally intended in the Similitude, and not the Leaving a particular Calling and secular Concerns; for if the latter had been the Apostle's Drift, he would have contradicted his own Example and Practice, *Acts XVIII. 3. And because he was of the same Craft, he abode with them and wrought* (for by their Occupation, they were Tent makers) *Acts XX. 33, 34. I have coveted no Man's Silver or Gold or Apparel. Tea, You your selves know, that these Hands have ministered unto my Necessities, and to them that were with me.* *1 Cor. IV. 12. And Labour working with our own Hands.* *1 Thess. II. 9. For*

we remember Brethren our Labour and Travel, for labouring Night and Day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God. 2 Thess. 3. 8, 9. Neither did we eat any Man's Bread for nought, but wrought with Labour and Travel Night and Day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you, not because we have not Power, but to make our selves an Example unto you, to follow us. And the Example of the other Apostles, John XXI. 3. Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing, they say unto him, we also go with thee, they went forth, and went into a Ship immediately, and that Night they caught nothing. He would also have gone against his own Precept, first, To the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, I have shewed you all Things, how that so labouring, ye ought to support the Weak, and to remember the Words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts. XX. 35. Upon which Hammond thus paraphraseth, " I have, " as by Words, saith he, so by Actions also " demonstrated to you, how that such as ye, " that is, Bishops and Governours of the " Church, are to take Care of the Sick and " Poor, and rather endeavour by Pains taking, to enable your selves to relieve others, " than to be chargeable or burthensome to " others, according to that Saying of Christ, " That 'tis a blessed and heroical Thing, to " give to others out of a Man's own Earnings, " and this infinitely more blessed, and better " becoming a Christian, than to be relieved " by others. Secondly, To the Church of
the

the Thessalonians, *When we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.* 2 Thess. III. 10. This Command is given to the whole Church, [if any] to Pastor and People, who should not expect Maintenance by others Labours, if they were able to get their Living themselves. And at V. 6. *We command you, Brethren, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; [Brethren]* the whole Society must not walk disorderly, that is, (a) forsake their Work, the Business of their Calling: The Apostle makes it an high irregularity in any Brother to be idle and forsake his Calling. (b) The Greek Word is the same here for [disorderly] which is rendred [unruly] 1 Thess. V. 14. or irregular; the Term is military, and signifies a disbanded Souldier, that hath left his Service or Obedience to his Commander; and is set here to denote any irregular Brother, and particularly his living idly, giving over the Work and Duty of his Calling, 2 Thess. III. 11. contrary to express Order V. 10. for which, if he reform not after the first and second Admonition, whether Pastor or private Brother, he is to be dealt with in a Way of Church Censure, for we are commanded to *withdraw from every Brother that walketh disorderly.* V. 6. that is, (c) forsakes the Work and Business of his Calling. To enforce this Precept, the Apostle

(a) Hammond. paraphr. in loc.

(b) ἀτακτος

(c) Hammond ubi supra.

sends them to his own Example: *Your selves know how ye ought to follow us: For we behaved not our selves disorderly amongst you, neither did we eat any Man's Bread for Nought, but wrought with Labour and Travail Night and Day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not Power, but to make our selves an Example unto you to follow us.* V. 7, 8, 9. Upon which, Baxter's Paraphrase is notable; "You know what our Example was, that
 "ought to be imitated; I did not live idly,
 "and look that the Churches should maintain me, or basely hang upon any, nor
 "needlessly burthen them; nor take their
 "Bread which I paid not for: But while I
 "taught you, I laboured and toiled at my
 "Trade, that I might be chargeable to none
 "of you: My Ministerial Office and Labour
 "made Maintenance from you my Due, but
 "Idleness I saw was a Sin, that had need of
 "Example as well as Doctrine to subdue it. And is not Idleness as much a Sin now as ever? And if so, is there not the same Reason for Ministers to subdue it by Example as well as Doctrine?

There is a manifest Distinction to be made between a Minister's following a particular Calling, and being entangled with the Affairs of this Life: Between an honest Diligence, and Covetousness: Between the Calling it self, and the Evil that may attend it. *Peter* and the other Apostles might surely go a fishing

ing, and yet not be entangled in their Nets; and *Paul* might follow his Employment of Tent-making, and yet not be entangled by it. If Men were not resolved to give Encouragement to Sloth, and hang upon others for Maintenance, they might easily discern the Difference between a particular Calling, and the sinful Entanglements thereof, which not only Ministers, but all others, should be careful to avoid.

There is another sort of Entangling, *2 Pet. II. 20.* which is by the Pollutions of the World; whereof, if any Minister of the Gospel be guilty, who is so blind as not to see the absolute Inconsistency of him and his Ministry with the Gospel? An entangled Minister, in this Sense, is a Minister of Satan and of Antichrist, and to be excommunicated or cut off, and cast away as a rotten Limb from the Body.

Tho' a Minister may follow a particular Calling, yet he may not entangle himself with the World, for as saith the Apostle *John Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World: If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him. 1 John II. 15.*

A Minister of the Gospel, should not be like a Bird in a Net, but like a Bird upon the Wing; his Affections should be above, his Conversation in Heaven; he should be a separate Creature, an elevated and disentangled Soul, as a Sojourner, not an Inhabitant.

Nor

Nor does his following some particular Calling go against 1 Tim. IV. 13. 15. the Consideration of which Text, we propose to our selves in the next Section.

SECT. IV.

1 Tim. IV. 13. 15. considered.

Till I come, give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine.

Meditate upon these Things, give thy self wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear unto all.

A Minister's following a particular Calling no more contradicts 1 Tim. IV. 15. *Τὰυτα μελέτα, ἐν τέτοις ἰδί, Meditate upon these Things, give thy self wholly to them*, than Peter's Fishing, and Paul's Tent-making, contradicted their Apostleship. The Word [wholly] is not in the Greek, neither will the Phrase bear it; but the Translators being fond of that scriptureless Distinction of Clergy and Laity, and the Payment of Tithes, for the Maintenance of their Order, took Liberty of stretching the Phrase, to reach themselves and their unwarrantable Practice.

That Timothy was to *give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine*. V. 13. *to take heed unto himself and his Doctrine*, and *to continue in them*. V. 16. and other such

Parts

Parts of his Ministerial Office, is plain enough; but that he was to be *wholly* in them, with the absolute Exclusion of a particular Calling, is not clear to my Understanding. The several Duties of his Ministry, he was chiefly and principally to attend, that is, he was to be mostly in that Work, in Comparison of any other Employment, which is the most of what the Phrase *ἐν ταῖς ἰσὶ* [be in these Things] will carry.

The Ministry is a weighty Work, and all we can do is too little for the Master whom we serve; when we have done our best and most, we must say, *We are unprofitable Servants*. But are there not great Duties incumbent upon Private Christians, and of as great Moment, Strict Injunction, Constant Exercise, and Indispensible Obligation, as those Ministers are concern'd in? Are not both Ministers and People under Duties of equal Strictness and Extent? And then, how can the One be more exempt from a particular Calling than the Other? If we draw a Parallell of the Precepts given to Ministers and People, they will appear to be equally Strict and Extensive, and therefore, as much Reason for the People to leave their particular Callings as the Ministers.

A
Parallell of the Precepts given
 TO
Ministers and Private Christians.

<i>Give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine; meditate upon these Things give thy self wholly to them: Take Heed unto thy self and to thy Doctrine, continue in them.</i> <i>1 Tim. iv. 13, 15, 16. Study to shew thy self approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth; be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient. 2 Tim. ii. 15. 24. Preach the Word, be instant, in Season, out of Season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine: Watch thou in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of an Evange-</i>	<i>Let the Word of God dwell in you richly in all Wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another. Col. iii. 16. Exhort one another daily, while it is called to Day. Heb. iii. 13. Be not conformed to this World. Rom. xii. 2. Strive to enter in at the straight gate. Luke xiii. 24. Labour not for the Meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting Life. John vi. 27. Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit you like Men. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Be strong in the Lord and in the Power of his Might, put on the whole Armour of God. Eph. vi. 10, 11. Pray always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance. v. 18. Be sober, be vigilant, and watch unto Prayer. 1 Pet. v. 8. and iv. 7. Pray without ceasing. 1 Thess. v. 17. Continue in Prayer, and watch in the same</i>
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list

list, make full Proof with Thanksgiving. Col. iv. 2. Be fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, continuing instant in Prayer. Rom. xii. 11, 12. Always abounding in the Work of the Lord. 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Compare now the Precepts which concern *Private Christians*, or Believers in general, with those given to *Timothy*, and in him to other Ministers of Christ, and we cannot perceive that the former have more Time allotted them for the World than the latter; both being pressed to Constancy and Uninterruptedness in Duty. And as both are specially engaged to the Work of the Lord, in those Stations they have in the House of God. So except there were some particular Precept or Example for Ministers leaving their ordinary Callings, whereof there is none extant in the Gospel, the People have as much Need to plead for Exemption from their secular Employments, as the Ministers have from theirs; because the Cases are parallell, and the Duties of equal Latitude and Obligation.

For upon Supposition, that the Ministers should say, *We cannot give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine, we cannot be instant in Season, and out of Season; and make full Proof of our Ministry; if we must follow*

our particular Callings : Will not a like Excuse palliate the People's Idleness too ? I can never possibly pray with all Prayer, and watch thereunto with all Perseverance, and be always abounding in the Work of the Lord, except I have also a Discharge from worldly Affairs.

If the Precepts be impartially examin'd together, with the Duties incumbent upon both, there is as much to be said for the People's Immunity from secular Concerns, as for their Ministers.

OBJECT. If it be objected, that the following a particular Calling, will be an Hindrance to Study, and unfit Men for the Ministerial Work.

ANSWER. 'Tis answered, that the same Holy Spirit, which calls any to the Service of Christ in the Dispensation of the Gospel, will undoubtedly confer suitable Abilities upon them; for God is as able now as ever to provide for his Church: And I do believe, that as the Churches of the Gospel were at first planted by the pure Waterings of the Spirit, so they are to be propagated to the End of the World. God will raise up Ministers after his own Heart, and these he will endue with meet Qualifications for the Errand he sends them upon. If a Man be a Herdsman, a Fisherman, a Tent-maker, of an Employment mean and abject in the World's Eye; and if he be destitute of all manner of Human Arts

Arts and Sciences: Yet if he hath the Spirit's Call to the Ministry, God will own and assist him therein, and his Work shall be bless't, when a Blast shall descend upon the most learned and polite Discourses of uncall'd and unsanctified Preachers.

SECT. V.

Concerning Human Learning, and its Use in the Ministry of the Gospel.

Human Learning, is so far from being an essential Qualification of a Minister of Christ, that it is rejected as wholly unnecessary; for in the Work of Conversion, *the Wisdom of this World is Foolishness with God.* 1 Cor. III. 19. And therefore as in the first publishing of the Gospel, *God chose the foolish Things of the World to confound the Wise, and the weak Things of the World to confound the Things which are mighty; and base Things of the World, and Things that are despised, yea and Things which are not, to bring to Nought Things that are, that no Flesh should glory in his Presence.* 1 Cor. I. 27, 28, 29. So undoubtedly he prosecutes the same Method now in the carrying of it on, for *the Foolishness of God is wiser than Men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than Men.* V. 25. That which in the Eye of Carnally wise Men, is Weakness and Folly, is the highest Wisdom, and more available,

in the Sight of God, to carry on the Purposes of the Gospel, than any human Contrivances, tho' never so mightily applauded by the Poor ignorant World.

The Myſteries of Chriſt's Kingdom were hid at firſt from the Wiſe and Prudent, and revealed unto Babes, *Mat. XI. 25.* And ſo they are now : for where is the Wiſe ? Where is the Scribe ? Where is the Diſputer of this World ? What doth the Philoſopher, School-man, Logician, know of the new Birth, the new Creature, the new Man ? He is as blind and ignorant to all ſpiritual Underſtanding of them, as *Nicodemus* was ; he is a Stranger to the Myſtical Oneneſs, that is between Chriſt and Believers, and turns it all into Topical or Political Union ; the unrenewed Man has not Ability to underſtand ſpiritual Things ſpiritually ; he can no more form right Conceptions of them, than a blind Man can diſtinguiſh Colours. The Things of the Spirit of God, are Fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. *1 Cor. II. 14.* He diſcourſes of Chriſt in a literal, ſuperficial Way, after an empty unfavoury Manner ; and he can do no otherwiſe, till he is renewed in the Spirit of his Mind, and made Partaker of the divine Nature. *Eph. IV. 23. 2 Pet. I. 4.* For till then, his Underſtanding is darkned, and he is alienated from the Life of God, and Jeſus Chriſt in the Myſtery is Fooliſhneſs to him.

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To preach Christ crucified, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God, 1 Cor. I. 24. is from the special Operation of God; who by this Foolishness of Preaching, is pleased to save them that believe, V. 21. the Instruments he usually chuses for this Work, are weak, despised Things, that the Excellency of the Power may be of him and not of Men, 1 Cor. I. 27, 28. and 2 Cor. IV. 7.

Vain Man is prone to be puffed up with his carnal Wisdom and philosophical Notions; but alas! what will they do towards opening blind Eyes, softning hard Hearts, and rescuing captive Souls? If ever such Work go forward, it must be by the mighty Power of the Spirit of God working upon the Consciences of Men; for *the Kingdom of God is not in Word but in Power*, 1 Cor. VI. 29. And when the Spirit thus powerfully works, let the Rabbies and Sophies of the World look upon it as weak, dull and contemptible, it is *able to pull down the strong Holds of Satan*. 2 Cor. X. 4. It is a quick and powerful Word, and sharper than any two edged Sword, and pierceth even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow. *Heb. IV. 12.*

The neglecting of the Plainness and Simplicity of the Gospel, and running to the Schools of Linguists, Orators, Philosophers and Rhetoricians, for Weapons out of their Armory,

Armory to fight the Prince of Darknes, who understands the weilding of those Weapons better than themselves, has been one main Cause of that Success he hath met with in the World: And 'tis not likely he should ever be defeated, till we engage him with the sole Artillery of the Lord of Hosts. For while we think to rout him by such Arms, we shamefully disappoint our Expectations, and are overcome by him, instead of a Conquest of him. Regeneration is the Work of the holy Spirit, the Effect of a supernatural Agent: This is Learning, not taught in Universities, but in the School of Jesus Christ, where the Holy Spirit is the Teacher.

OBJECT. But how can a Minister be qualified to explain or apply the holy Scriptures to the Edification of his Hearers, if himself understand not the Original Languages, in which they were written. How shall he know that this, or the other Text of Scripture is rightly translated? Can he instruct others with Certainty, in that which himself has but upon Trust from the Translators?

ANSWER. This Objection appears more plausible at first View, than it will be found weighty upon due Consideration, for

First, 'Tis granted by all, that the *Autographa*, or Writings, of the Old and New Testament from the Hands of the first Penmen

Men are long since lost by the Injury of Time: Whence it follows, that the most Learned at this Day, cannot be infallibly certain, that the present Copies they have, are exactly agreeable with the first Writings: The most they can plead in this Case is a moral Assurance: And so much an unlearned Man may have, for the Truth of our present Translation.

By moral Assurance, I understand a firm Assent of the Mind to a Thing, upon Motives sufficient to satisfy any prudent Man; for Instance, that there is such a Place as the *Hague*, or *Amsterdam*, I am not infallibly assured, that is, my Understanding is not absolutely secured from all Possibility of Error; but, tho' I was never there, yet I am morally assured about it, for I have the Testimony of many credible Persons who have been there, and have written of it, and have so well satisfied me, that I have no Doubt on my Mind about it. I might Instance likewise in Persons and Records of ancient Times; we are satisfied that there were such Persons as *Alexander the Great*, and *Julius Caesar*; and that the Books, which go under the Names of *Plato* and *Seneca*, were their Works, tho' we have no infallible Certainty thereof: And so for Translations of the Bible, we cannot be infallibly assured that this or that is rightly done, but we have a

moral Certainty, that is, we have such Grounds and Reasons for our Assent, as may fully satisfy any prudent Man, that the present Translation is a true Translation for the Substance of it; for we have the Testimony of a Cloud of credible Persons, the Unanimous Approbation of Thousands of Learned Men, that there is not any material Deviation from the Original, or any Thing that is contrary to the Analogy of Faith: It is a Translation allow'd and us'd by all English Protestants, it is quoted, preached from, paraphras'd and commented upon by the Learned, experienced in the Hearts of the Faithful, and demonstrated in their Lives.

Besides, were a perfect Knowledge of the Original Languages so absolutely necessary to the Qualification of a Gospel Minister, many, even of those who are held not meanly learned, will find themselves deficient: for they had Need be well acquainted not only with *Greek* and *Latin*, but with most of the *Oriental Tongues*. Besides the Knowledge of the *Hebrew*, a Competent Skill is necessary in the *Persian*, *Chaldee*, *Coptick*, *Syriack*, and *Arabick* Dialects; there being many (a) *Hebrew* Words which have *Arabick* Roots, and not a few *Arabisms* in the Poetical Books, especially *Job*; and also *Persian*, *Chaldee*, *Cop-*

(a) *Waltoni Præfat. ad Introduc. ad Lect. Ling. Orient.*

tick and *Syriack* Words, but most (a) *Chaldee* ; for (b) there are above two Hundred Verses of that Extraction in the Old Testament. Not to mention the *Keri* and *Cethib*, the various Readings and Writings in use among the *Masorites*, what I have already hinted, may shew the Necessity of being very considerable Linguists, for those that undertake to read from the Originals.

Touching the Truth and Accuracy of the last Translation of the Bible, compar'd with all former Translations, whether *Tindal's*, *Matthew's*, *Coverdale's*, *Whitchurch's*, *Geneva*, *Queen Elizabeth's*, or the *Bishop's Bible*, I will recite a Passage of *Dr. Kilby*, one of the Translators, and a young Preacher, who in his Sermon before the *Doctor*, excepted against the Translation of many Words, and offered three Reasons why a particular Word should have been otherwise translated, (c) The *Doctor* told him when he had done, he might have preached more useful Doctrine, and not have fill'd his Auditor's Ears with needless Exceptions against the late Translation; and for that Word, for which he offered to his Congregation three Reasons why it ought to have been translated, as he said, he (that

(a) *Byrb. Chald. Gram.*

(b) *Leusdeni Præfat. ad Lex. Hebræo-Lat.*

(c) *Sanderfon's Life before his Sermons. p. 4.*

is the *Doctor*) and others had considered all them, and found thirteen more considerable Reasons, why it was translated as now Printed.

It is indeed to be acknowledged, that those Ministers who understand not the Originals, are indebted to the Translators for the *Letter of the Text*: Mark what I say, for the *Letter of the Text*: for we are no more bound to take their Sense and Interpretation of it, where they interpret wrong, than we are to receive the *Jew's* Exposition of the Old Testament, unto whom were committed the Oracles of God, and through whose Hands they were convey'd to us; or the *Papist's* false Glosses on the New, because they pretend to be the sole Keepers, and Transmitters of it, and its Meaning.

The translating of the Holy Scriptures has been doubtless a Work of great Use and Service in the Church, yet it may have been performed by Persons not properly qualified for the Ministry of the Gospel. What may we think of the Translations of *Aquila*, *Theodotion*, and *Symmachus*, who were *Jewish* Profelytes: and of *Pagnine*, with *Montanus's* Interlineary Alterations, and *Malvendas's* Version, all *Papist's*? Carnal and unregenerate Men, who have Skill in Arts and Languages, can understand the plain Words, translate, and give the Grammatical Sense of the Holy Scriptures

Scriptures; while yet their Knowledge of them is but merely notional and talkative, not affecting their Hearts nor influencing their Lives.

But besides the Literal and Grammatical Rendring of Scriptures, which carnal Men may be capable to do, there is a Mystical and Spiritual Meaning, which is manifested to none but the Saints. *Col. I. 26.* To whom, as to the holy Apostles and Prophets, it is revealed by the Spirit. *Eph. III. 5.* The Knowledge of which, by the Revelation of the Spirit, is that which is a necessary Qualification for a true Gospel-Minister.

I would not be understood to despise human Learning; It may be useful in its Place, but the Preference must be given to the Teachings and Influences of the holy Spirit.

After the many Ostentatious Flourishes, made in Honour of Academical Learning, by the greatest Admirers of it, let them tell me, whether ever one Soul was converted by it to Jesus Christ? Is it able to grasp the Mysteries of the Gospel, and to penetrate that within the Veil? Can it discern the Things which are of God, in a right spiritual Manner? Can it open the Nature of the New Birth, and distinguish between the Pangs of the Spirit of Bondage, and the

Groanings of the Spirit of Adoption? Is it able to strengthen the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees? Does it know how to interpret the Accents of Grief, and to administer Comfort to the Afflicted in Spirit? And can it discourse of Heavenly Things in an Heavenly Manner? No; we believe, till Men are taught of God, tho' never so well accomplish'd otherwise, they are not fitly qualified for the Ministry of the Gospel, because it is a Spiritual Dispensation.

SECT. VI.

An Explanation of 1 Pet. IV. 11.

If any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God; if any Man minister let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth: that God in all Things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be Praise and Dominion for Ever.

The Explication of this Text depends much upon a true Answer to the following Question, *viz.*

QUESTION. What is it to speak as the Oracles of God?

ANSWER.

ANSWER: The Greek Text is *ὡς λογία Θεοῦ*. Now the Particle [*ὡς*, as,] is often used for a Note of Similitude or Likeness, and then the Sense would be, to speak *like* the Oracles of God; which would be very injurious to the Truth, if the Preacher were to preach like the Truth; for then he might preach Lies by Authority; which it has been the Devil's Stratagem to disguise and to publish under the Likeness and Semblance of Truth. There is then another Signification of this Particle [*ὡς*, as,] and it is a denoting the Truth of a Thing; In which Sense we meet with it in several Places of the New Testament. Thus when *Herod* would have put *John* to Death, he feared the Multitude, because they counted him [*ὡς*] *as* a Prophet, *Mat. XIV. 5.* The *Apostle* giving the Reason, wherefore *Israel*, which followed after the Law of Righteousness, miss'd of the End they aim'd at, says, it was because they sought it not by Faith, but [*ὡς*] *as* it were by the Works of the Law, *Rom. IX. 32.* And vindicating his Ministry from those corrupt Mixtures. some others were guilty of, [*ὡς*] *as* of Sincerity, [*ὡς*] *as* of God, in the Sight of God, speak we in Christ, that is, we speak in Sincerity and from God, what we speak. *2 Cor. II. 17.* *John* speaking of the Glory they saw in Christ, while veiled with a Body of Mortality. *We beheld*, says he, *his Glory, the Glory*, [*ὡς*] *as* of the only Begotten

gotten of the Father. John I. 14. Where [as] clearly denotes the Truth and Certainty of Christ's Divinity, and not his Likeness to the only Begotten of the Father: for if Christ had been but like the Son of God, he had not been the very Son of God, as undoubtedly he was, and we by the Scriptures maintain against both the Ancient and Modern Arrians, or Antitrinitarians, So here *ὡς λόγια θεοῦ*, as the Oracles of God, signifies not speaking like, but speaking the very Oracles of God; and so are the following Words to be taken, *If any Man minister*; let him do it [as] as of the Ability which God giveth, that is, let him do it truly according to his Ability.

To speak then, as the Oracles of God, or Revelations of God's Will, for so the Phrase signifies, is to speak by Divine Instinct; or as *Peter* expresses it. 2 Eph. I. 21. *Holy Men of God, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* They spake what God was pleased to give to them by the Inspiration of his Spirit.

There is as absolute a Necessity now of the Spirit's Help for the right Opening of Scripture, as there was at first for the giving of it forth. The same Holy Author, that endited it, must be the Interpreter of it. *No Man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.* 1 Cor. XII. 3. *The Natural Man receiveth*

receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. II.

14. The Scriptures are like the Book sealed on the Back-side with seven Seals. *Rev. V. 1.* And no Man in Heaven or in Earth, can open it. *V. 3.* But the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, the Root of *David*. *V. 5.*

We are to wait upon God for his Manifestation of the Sense of the Holy Scriptures, and for Ability to speak it in Life and Power: for as it hath pleased God to illuminate our Understandings by his holy Spirit, so are we to attend to his sacred Teachings in all our Expositions and Applications. If we are true Ministers of Jesus Christ, we must not preach our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, *2 Cor. IV. 5.* From whom we must receive before we deliver to the People. *1 Cor. XI. 23.* and *XV. 3.* Assimilating the two golden Pipes, which received Oyl from the Olive-Branches, and then emptied themselves into the Gold. *Zech. IV. 12.* We are at best but earthen Vessels, wherein the Heavenly Treasure is received: We are but Recipients, not Efficients or Procurers thereof. It must be given unto us, before we can give it forth, as we ought, unto others.

Alas! What is an Elaborate Weekly Collection of a Man's own framing, to the powerful Infusions of the Spirit of God? What
G is

is a little Human Oratory and Worldly Eloquence, to the Divine Rhetorick of an inspired Soul? Gospel Preaching is almost lost among Men, and a formal, quaint, and Court-like Way of Discourfing, is become the Fashion and Folly, as well as Sin and Reproach, of the Age. Sermons are now generally the Creatures of Wit and Invention, and fitted to please the Ear and tickle the Fancy: But sound Gospel Preaching flows from a divine Spring, and runs to the Hearts of the Hearers.

The Souls of the People are not to be fed with the Scraps and Fragments of Weekly Study, but with the Crumbs that drop from their Master's Table, with the Meat which perisheth not; this is the heavenly allotment indeed for the People's Souls: the other is Man's Allowance, which while it pampers the Fancy, is found, by woful Experience, to famish the Soul.

Who ever read that the first Preachers of the Gospel studied for their Sermons? Did they use Notes, or read written Preparations to the People, and call that Preaching? They were endued with Power from on high, and enabled to speak without all manner of Premeditation. They had it first given in to them, before they gave it forth to the People.

Author

Author-studied Preaching, and the Use of Notes, are manifest Innovations, which crept into the Church with other Corruptions, in the dark Night of *Apostacy*.

There is not the least Colour in the New Testament, for reading a pen'd Discourse to a Congregation under the Name of Preaching; nor was it ever in Use, till Men ran before they were sent by God, and the Ministry became a Trade rather than a Call, as it is among many at this Day.

SECT. VII.

A Distinction between the Art, and the Gift of Preaching.

Left any should mistake this Discourse, and imagine, that my Design is totally to throw down Learning and Study, and to reduce Things to a State of Ignorance and Sloth, I desire them to take Notice, that my Drift is to distinguish rightly between the *Art* and the *Gift* of Preaching, and to give unto Study the Things that are Study's, and unto the Spirit the Things that are the Spirit's.

The Art of Preaching, lies in an acquired Knowledge of the Generalsof Religion, and

an Aptness to propound and apply them. And this falling under certain Rules and Canons, for Method, Manner and Expression, Men of meer natural and artificial Abilities may be very expert and ready in it : And yet this sort of Preaching, tho' now much in Vogue, is not properly Preaching, but rather a Declaiming, or Exercising Men's innate and acquired Abilities. They that are most Eminent for this Way of Preaching, are the Men which usually pen their Discourses, and despise all Sermons that are not attired in their Dresses. I desire not to be too censorious, but this *Art of Preaching* may be in Men unrenewed, and altogether void of those Gifts of the Spirit which alone fit men for the Ministry of the Gospel.

The Gift of Preaching, excludes neither Men's natural Abilities, such as Solidity of Judgment, Tenaciousness of Memory, Warmness of Affection, Volubility of Speech, nor Intellectual Habits, which are acquired and perfected by Study and Experience, as when Men become great Linguists, Acute Disputants, Excellent Orators &c. because Grace sanctifies these, and makes them subservient to God's Glory : But it consists in special Enablements of the holy Spirit, and is not subject to Rules of Art and Study. Here the Teat is put into the Mouth, and Manna is given from Heaven. The Divine Embassa-
dour

dour is empowered to speak in Demonstration of the Spirit, that our Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God.

1 Cor. II. 4, 5. In such a Minister meet both χάρις and χαρίσματα, Grace and Gifts; Grace to sanctify, and Gifts to edify. God hath joyned them together in him, and 'tis out of the Power of Man to put them asunder. In a Word, we do not banish Study from the Preachers of the Gospel; but we make a Difference between a studied Sermon, and a Sermon preached by Inspiration from above. It is no Matter, how plain and inartificial the Discourse is, if so be it bear the Image and Superscription of the Spirit. For such Preaching will effect that which all the Art in the World will fail in.

'Tis said of Junius, before his Conversion,
 “ that meeting once with a Country Man
 “ as he was in a Journey; and falling into
 “ Discourse with him about divers Points
 “ in Religion, he observ'd the plain Man to
 “ talk so experimentally, with so much
 “ Heartiness and Affection, as made him
 “ first to think, that sure there was some-
 “ thing more in these Truths than his noti-
 “ onal human Learning had yet discovered;
 “ which occasioned his more serious Enqui-
 “ ry into them, and afterward his Conver-
 “ sion.

So mighty in Operation is the Word of God, when spoken in the Evidence and Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power.

To conclude, I am not against Learning and Study, but against an undue Exaltation of it, as if the Gracious Assistance of the Spirit of God were not enough to enable Men to preach effectually without it: Or as if, where there is no Study, there could be no divine Inspiration.

Let then the Ministers of the Gospel, read, pray, meditate, and study as much as they can; but let them not build upon these Preparations: but when a Man is called to preach, let him give himself wholly up to God, renouncing all self and selfishness, and what the Lord shall give unto him, that let him speak. Thus he ought to exercise his Faith and Confidence in God, and if he so do, he shall not be destitute of his Assistance: And if he finds at any Time he is not so assisted in the Work, as it may fall out through Weakness or Unwatchfulness, let him rather desist for that Season, and wait for God's returning Help, than fly to studied Succours, to do which, is in Effect to fly from God, and that is to distrust Him, and Distrust is a certain Tempting of Him. Whereas an entire Resignation of
our

our selves to Him, by Faith, humbly begging and waiting for his Aid according to his Promise, is the Duty of every true Minister: Whosoever undertakes to preach, without the Aid and Assistance of the Holy Spirit immediately influencing him thereunto, has no more Warrant for what he does, than they have to act in the Capacity of Embassadours, who never received any Commission from their Masters.

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